

EVALUATION BRIEF

December 2021

FINAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION — JOINT IOM / UN WOMEN / ILO PROJECT

“EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS AFFECTED BY MIGRATION FOR INCLUSIVE AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PEACEBUILDING”

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluators. More details can be found in the full evaluation report.

Evaluation type: External independent final evaluation

Evaluators: Gheorghe Caraseni, international consultant, Team Leaders; Elmira Brown, national consultant

Field visit dates: 25-29 November 2021

Final report date: 31 December 2021

Commissioned by: IOM, UN Women, and ILO

Managed by: Evaluation Management Group (EMG) with all participating UN agencies, led/coordinated by IOM (Task manager: Sarah Harris, Regional M&E Officer, IOM)

Evaluation purpose: (1) to assess the programmatic progress and final project performance, to contribute both to overall accountability and learning, and (2) to develop recommendations on the priority areas for future similar initiatives.

Evaluation criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability (OECD-DAC)

Evaluation methodology: Mixed methods (desk review, interviews, focus group discussions, direct observation), with a participatory and utilization-focused approach, and attention to human rights based approach (HRBA), leave no one behind (LNOB), disability inclusion, and gender equality.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project goal was to make a tangible contribution to peacebuilding in target provinces of Kyrgyz Republic by promoting full recognition of the role of women and girl migrants in inclusive community development and peacebuilding.

The Theory of Change was based on a consideration that forced migration of women and girls and the harmful gender norms and attitude of the community towards women’s rights and contribution to community development constitutes a destabilizing factor for social cohesion and creates visible barriers to women’s engagement in peacebuilding. It is linked to the three levels of the logic of the action:

- Community level: to change public perception and to build community environment conducive to women migrants’ engagement in peacebuilding;
- Policy level: gender-responsive policies to recognize the role and contribution of women migrants;
- Individual level: empower women and girl migrants to participate in community development, decision making and local peacebuilding initiatives.

The project targeted girls and women vulnerable to forced migration or willing/plan to migrate (unemployed, girls and divorced women vulnerable to forced migration/potential future migrants); returning

Project information:

Geographical coverage: **The Kyrgyz Republic** (provinces of Jalal-Abad, Osh, Batken and Talas)

Participating Agencies: **IOM, UN Women, ILO**

Project period: **November 2019 - November 2021**

Donor: **UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)**

Budget: **1,450,000 USD**
500,000 USD - IOM
500,000 USD - UN Women
450,000 USD - ILO

migrant women and girls (may be potentially forced to re-migrate) and local public authorities. The project also targeted men and boys, who were engaged in Gender Action Learning System (GALS) activities; community members; local self-government; national stakeholders.

The project had three intended outcomes:

- 1) Target communities recognize and support women and girls’ role and contribution to peacebuilding and community development.
- 2) Women and girls in communities affected by migration are empowered economically and socially to protect their rights and participate in peaceful community development.
- 3) National and local authorities apply socially inclusive approaches in policy making and implement gender-responsive peacebuilding at the local level in communities affected by migration.

KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Relevance

The project is multi-dimensional and highly relevant to needs of the stakeholders and is aligned to the thematic priorities and national development strategies. The project used a multi-level and multi-stakeholder participatory approach based on involvement of a wide range of national and local partners and state and non-state (community members) stakeholders. The project tackled different topics (migration, peacebuilding, gender, community development) at different dimensions, relevant to needs of local (SHG, LSG, community members) and national (e.g. State Migration Service, NBKR) stakeholders and selected methods of delivery were adequate. It reflects thematic priorities of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is aligned to nationalized SDGs.

The project is change-oriented, based on valid ToC and is mostly consistent in terms of results chain with two types of well articulated expected results (outputs and outcomes) interconnected with baselines, targets, milestones, performance indicators and end-lines. The project outputs are linked to outcomes without any significant gaps. The expected impact, as 3rd type of the project result from the results chain is not reflected in the project document and reports.

The project is gender-oriented and rights-based, and has a balanced approach targeting “rights holders” (or demand side) and “duty bearers” (or supply side). The gender and women empowerment aspects are integrated within project design and the project was focused on one side on local and national policy development and capacity development of the “duty bearers” (LSG, State Migration Service, other state stakeholders), on the other side on empowerment of the “rights holders” (SHG, community members, especially women and girls). The project follows the LNOB principle and among others is focused on women empowerment. Other vulnerable people (e.g. minorities, PwD, elderly people) are not specifically targeted.

Coherence

The coherence represents a mixed picture, mostly well in terms of internal coherence, i.e. the project is well aligned with other relevant projects implemented by the RUNO), but weak regarding the external coherence, i.e. communication and synergy with other PBF-funded initiatives. The two main reasons for the weak external coherence are: inactive Joint Steering Committee of the

PBF-funded projects and poor bi-lateral interactions with other initiatives from the same thematic area.

Effectiveness and impact

The project performed well and generated positive changes across all three outcomes and levels:

At a *community level* the project contributed to public attitude change in support of women’s role in community development and peacebuilding by increasing awareness on: a) the role of women and girls in peacebuilding and b) harmful gender norms towards women and girls in migrant communities.

At a *local level*, the project was effective in: 1) increasing the access to information on the role of women and girls in peacebuilding and promoting public engagement of the women in local decision-making processes (political empowerment), which among others contributed to improved awareness and increased number of the elected women in the local governments; 2) providing financial literacy and increasing access to economic development opportunities (economic empowerment), which contributed to economic empowerment of the women; 3) increasing the role of women in the local development and family strengthening (social empowerment) social and political empowerment of the targeted women.

At a *policy level*, the project was instrumental in providing national and local policy-making assistance and mainstreaming a gender-sensitive approach and norms in in developed National Migration Policy and LSEDP/LAP.

Efficiency

Analyzing project fulfillment versus use of financial resources, **the project operated in an efficient manner reaching majority of the targets within anticipated budget lines.** The resources were used for budget lines as planned without significant deviations. The evaluation team did not find any alternative solutions, which could be provided at fewer expenses and/ or would be more economical.

Sustainability

Overall the sustainability of the project differs from component to component. Thus, in terms of policy sustainability, the prospects seems to be promising given the commitment of the national and local public authorities to implement the State Migration Policy and LSEDP/LAPs developed with the project support, while in terms of institutional and financial sustainability perspectives are in some cases promising (capacity development of the local stakeholders, approval of SOP, institutionalisation of the financial literacy course,

functionality of the SHG, commitment of the local actors) and in other cases weak (technical expertise and financial sources for implementation of developed National Migration Policy and LSEDP/LAPs).

GOOD PRACTICES

The project generated and promoted some scalable project delivery and management-related good practices and innovative approaches, which, as described in the report, brought added values.

These good practices include the GALS methodology and Positive Deviance methods, the adjusted GET Ahead approach, participatory methods in community needs assessment, gender-responsive budgeting, non-formal learning methods and remote communication, joint project planning and management among the RUNOs, and use of baseline and endline assessments.

LESSONS LEARNED

Based on the evaluation's findings and conclusions, the evaluators identified four main lessons to be learned. The lessons are regarding the external coherence, project approach and capacity development (relevance) and exit strategy (sustainability).

1. Coherence, beside the Joint Steering Committee, can be secured through direct bi- (multi) lateral interaction with respective projects. Future similar projects should use different approaches to share good practices and lessons learnt and create synergies with other projects.
2. A multi-level approach tackling the same topic at different levels contributes to comprehensiveness, consistence and sustainability prospects. Therefore, in future initiatives there is a need to secure that the multi-level approach represents the in-depth approach of the key issue targeted by the project.
3. Online capacity development events, beside the disadvantages have also some important advantages, but needs to be adjusted in terms of intensity and duration. Stakeholders mentioned that online trainings reduced efficiency of the capacity development and affected interaction and communication with other participants and trainers.
4. A pilot project might not need an exit strategy, since the project is perceived by some as a pilot initiative that is testing the innovative approaches and or topics with different types of stakeholders. Rather, it might be necessary to develop a replication, reinforcement or scale up concept.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation suggests eight prioritized recommendations (seven to RUNOs and one to donor) based on the findings, conclusions and lessons learned. The recommendations are developed and explained by the evaluation team to its best professional judgment following analysis of the gathered data, presentation and consultations with the key stakeholders.

Recommendation 1:

RUNOs to capitalize on achievements, use the momentum and scale up the good practices generated by the project.

(Priority: High, Timeframe: Immediate)

Recommendation 2:

RUNOs to reinforce the "peacebuilding" component and develop trans-border peacebuilding projects.

(Priority: High, Timeframe: Immediate)

Recommendation 3:

RUNOs to focus on supporting implementation of the elaborated national gender-sensitive migration policy and local socio-economic development plans.

(Priority: High, Timeframe: Immediate)

Recommendation 4:

RUNOs to reduce the training component and increase the mentoring one, as capacity development method.

(Priority: Medium, Timeframe: Mid-term)

Recommendation 5:

RUNOs to involve more actively the territorial offices of the Ministry of Labour, Social Welfare and Migration.

(Priority: Medium, Timeframe: Mid-term)

Recommendation 6:

RUNOs to plan for baseline and endline assessments and use the lessons learned and recommendations provided by the endline assessment.

(Priority: High, Timeframe: Long-term)

Recommendation 7:

Donor to update the templates of the project proposal and progress reports and to include impact, sustainability and coherence related aspects.

(Priority: Medium, Timeframe: Mid-term)